Barista Bob

WHITE PAPER 001

2026 EDITION

AN INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Beyond the Coffee Machine.

Rethinking coffee experiences, business models and everyday spaces through robotics.



Your everyday barista.

CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION

EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE

The opportunity is bigger than automation.

A robotic beverage system is most interesting when it makes something possible that was previously difficult to offer.

Automating a drink is only the beginning. The more important question is how that capability fits into the business, the space and the lives of the people who use it. A supermarket, an independent café and a hotel may all need coffee, but they are buying different forms of value.

Standardised hardware. Personalised experiences. Shared services at scale.

SIX ENVIRONMENTS / SIX VALUE PROPOSITIONS

04 Retail
Make more of existing footfall.

06 Cafés & Bakeries
Keep local character; share capabilities.

08 Hospitality
Make coffee part of the stay.

10 Education
Accessible everyday drinks.

11 Travel & Transit
Good coffee along the way.

12 Workplaces
Better breaks and employee experience.

This paper combines a practitioner's view of coffee automation with commercial concepts and a founder-reported hotel case. It is a framework for evaluating real sites, not a market forecast or a promise of operating returns.

01 / THE SYSTEM

One system. Many possibilities.

A repeatable drink-making capability can support very different local experiences.

WHERE	Retail / Café / Hotel / Campus / Transit / Workplace
SPACE	Coffee corner / Café integration / Self-service café / Grab & Go
MENU	Coffee / Latte art / Matcha / Protein / Cold drinks
PAYMENT	Direct purchase / Host-funded / Vouchers / Subsidies
SERVICES	Toppings / Sourcing / Custom cups / Design / Maintenance

Self-service describes how a drink is ordered and collected. It does not dictate whether the guest leaves, sits down, reads or talks with a friend. Bob can support a coffee corner or become one element of a wider café.



Coffee



Matcha



Protein drinks

Illustrative product visuals; menu availability and ingredients depend on configuration.

02 / RETAIL

More than a shopping trip.

Make coffee part of retail, not a separate business that starts from zero.



Retail context, cropped from the supplied website-development screenshot.

An existing audience

Retailers already invest in locations, product selection and footfall. Coffee can meet another need on a shopping trip and pair naturally with bread, pastries, breakfast and snacks.

A reason to stay

A coffee corner can be a convenient purchase on the way out, or a comfortable place to pause and talk. Not every shopper is in a hurry.

Beyond novelty

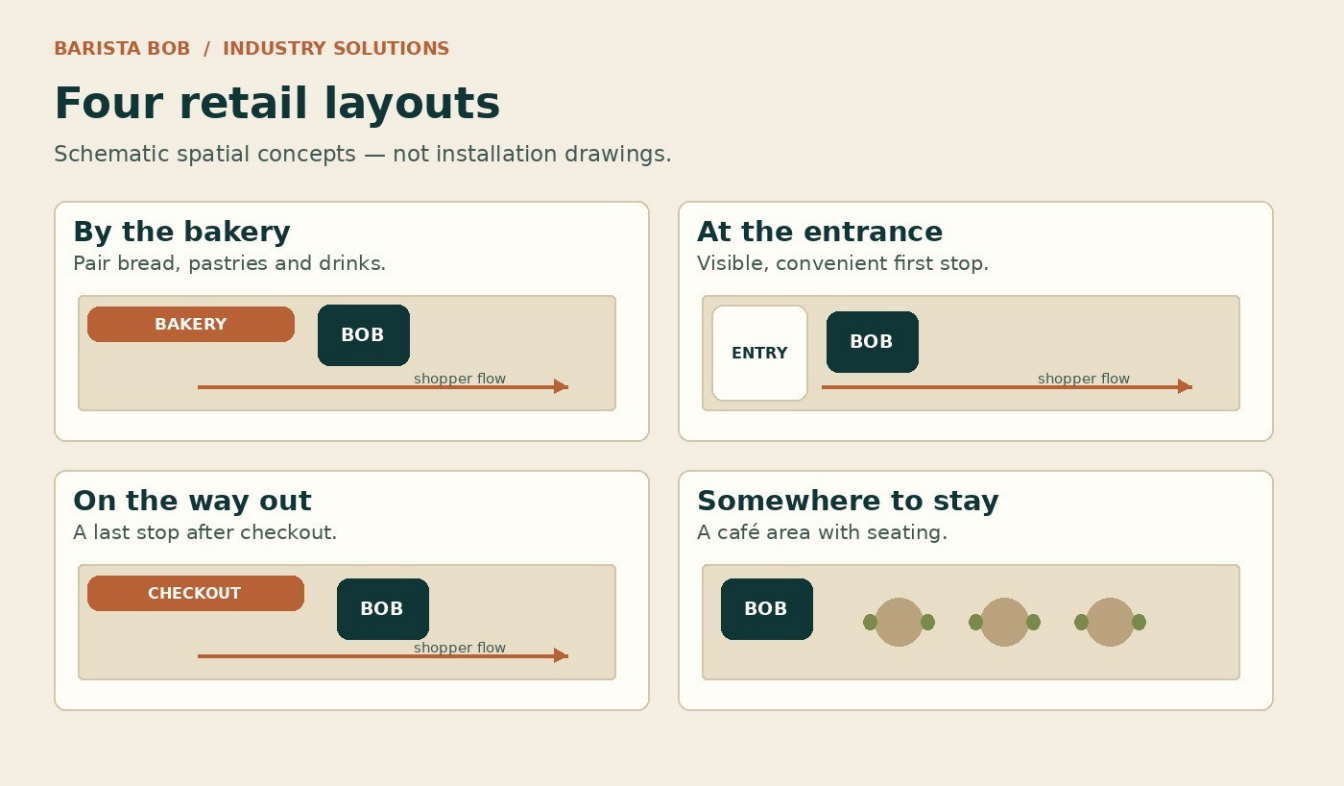
Where a conventional commercial coffee machine already exists, a robot must justify its place through the drink offering, customer experience and actual store-level contribution. Compare both options using real volumes, costs and operating demands.

Build on existing footfall. Add a reason to return.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Find the right little corner.

Choose a location based on customer flow, the existing offer and the way the store operates.



Four schematic retail layouts, not installation drawings. Verify access, circulation and clearances on site.

The menu

Test breakfast combinations, familiar coffee, matcha and other configured drinks. Different people and times of day may favour different choices.

The operating model

Customers choose and collect drinks. Bob prepares configured recipes; store staff take care of replenishment, cleaning and monitoring, with agreed service support.

MEASURE BEFORE ROLLOUT

Cups per day / Menu mix / Basket attachment / Daily care time / Uptime / Contribution per store

03 / CAFÉS & BAKERIES

Premium coffee. Made a little differently.

Automated preparation can support a premium-style experience without making every cup depend on a specialist's manual pouring skill.



Coffee latte



Matcha latte

Actual team-supplied drink photographs: layered coffee pattern and simple matcha heart.

More than a pattern

Controlled pouring can bring espresso, milk and fine foam together in a deliberate way. The drink still depends on beans, extraction, milk preparation, recipe and calibration. Latte art alone does not establish superior taste.

More room for hospitality

For supported automated drinks, the café need not employ a specialist to pour every latte by hand. Staff still look after quality, ingredients, hygiene and the guest. The aim is to make skilled preparation more accessible.

Premium-style drinks. An automated cost structure.

THE EXPERIENCE

Let the customer be the chef.

Independent cafés can make small, personal experiences their signature.



AI-generated café concept.

A little creativity goes a long way

Some guests enjoy being part of the making: adding cream, sprinkling chocolate flakes or choosing a signature flavour. A well-designed self-service toppings station turns that moment into an optional, playful experience.

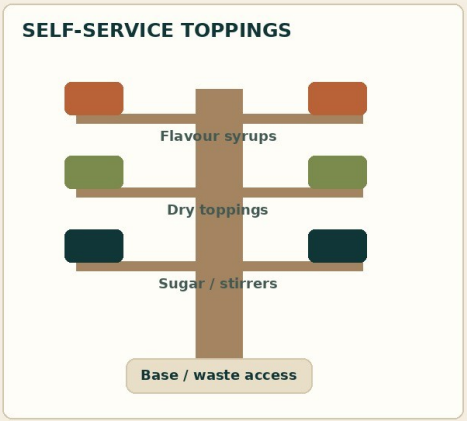
Make it unmistakably yours

A one- or two-store café can keep its local identity while using Bob for repeatable drink preparation. Shareable moments, seasonal artwork and thoughtful service can help tell the café's own story.

BARISTA BOB / INDUSTRY SOLUTIONS

Let the customer be the chef.

A compact, tree-like toppings station — conceptual organisation, not a final specification.



01
1. Pick up
Start with a finished drink from Bob.

02
2. Make it yours
Add a favourite topping, cream or flavour where offered.

03
3. Enjoy
Sit down, take a photo or share a creation.

Illustrative topping-station concept; confirm food-safe containers, hygiene, allergens and storage.

04 / HOSPITALITY

A welcome coffee. A reason to return.

A resort in Yangzhou, China, offers a useful example of coffee as part of the stay.

FOUNDER-REPORTED CASE / EARLY CUSTOMER

Family-focused resort hotel in natural surroundings, away from city coffee chains.

01 → 02 → 03 → 04

Check-in

Guests in qualifying room categories receive a complimentary coffee voucher.

A family moment

Children watch and try to talk to Bob; parents enjoy the coffee.

Another cup

Guests return during the day for reasonably priced paid drinks.

Something to share

Guests invite friends or business visitors to try the robot's coffee.

Existing space and existing staff

The hotel already had a generous lobby. Reception staff could monitor the workstation, carry out agreed daily care and notice issues promptly. The team reports one day of training and describes the initial venue-side outlay as effectively zero under this arrangement.

A shared commercial interest

The reported arrangement shares paid drink revenue with the hotel. Guests receive a welcome benefit, and additional drink purchases can generate revenue without a separate café operation.

CASE INSIGHT

A hospitality amenity can also be a small business, especially when it uses resources the venue already has.

Case narrative supplied by the founding team; property unnamed. No audited revenue, itemised cost or satisfaction figures supplied. Training and entry-cost observations apply only to this specific arrangement.

BUSINESS HOTELS & CONFERENCES

Good ideas deserve good coffee.

The coffee break at a conference is a peak-demand problem, a hospitality moment and a branding opportunity.

ILLUSTRATIVE BEIJING CONFERENCE SCENARIO

400–500
potential attendees

200–250
assumed first cups

Around a 2 pm keynote, demand peaks; a second wave may follow during the break.

Planning example, not a measured event, order count or single-unit capacity specification.

Plan from the service window

If half the room wants a coffee immediately after lunch, plan backwards from the available break. Required drinks per minute = expected orders ÷ serving window. Compare with measured end-to-end cycle times, the number of stations and staff capacity.

Something worth remembering

Freshly prepared espresso-based drinks, ice-enabled options and tea-based drinks can create a different experience from batch filter coffee. A sponsor's approved logo on a prepared latte or on a custom cup could add a memorable, shareable detail.

A BETTER EVENT IS NOT JUST A FASTER MACHINE

Coordinate ordering, collection, menu complexity, replenishment and parallel service. Branded drinks require a validated method and a production plan that fits the break.

The conference model is under exploration with business-hotel prospects in Beijing. Logo-on-drink capability and actual throughput require confirmation before offering them as a service.

05 / EDUCATION

Good coffee between everything else.

Campus life offers a stable, returning audience, with recurring moments of demand and an appetite for new choices.

A CAMPUS DAY

Between classes
A quick coffee or a familiar favourite.

Lunch break
A drink to go with food; explore protein or cold options.

Study time
Matcha, coffee or another favourite, with room to sit.

Late evening
Drink service aligned with the venue's approved hours.

A menu for everyday life

Young consumers may welcome the opportunity to try matcha, alternative milk, cold drinks or protein beverages. But affordability, taste and convenient service matter more than initial novelty.

Affordable drinks. A sustainable model.

A per-cup partnership, shared sourcing and supporting services may help campus operators manage costs and explore lower drink prices. A university, student-services organisation or catering partner may be the decision maker.

MEASURE THE CAMPUS FIT

Price accessibility / Repeat demand / Menu mix / Term and holiday patterns / Peak queues / Cost per served cup

06 / TRAVEL & TRANSIT

A good coffee along the way.

High footfall is not the same as suitable demand. Design the offer around the time travellers actually have.

Very little time.

For a passenger whose train leaves in minutes, a simple espresso from a conventional push-button machine may be the better choice. Full robotic preparation includes extra setup and handling.



Time matters.

A moment to spare.

Another traveller may enjoy watching a latte being made or exploring something different. Bob can coexist with faster service options for the shortest-duration needs.



Enjoy the moment.

DESIGN FOR CHOICE, NOT A SINGLE QUEUE

The team's working hypothesis is that dual-arm latte-art preparation can be comparable to a human barista's pouring process. End-to-end order times still depend on preparation, menu, payment, pickup and peak queues. Measure those timings before publishing a comparison.

A LITTLE SOUVENIR YOU CAN DRINK

A city-inspired coffee or cup design could turn an everyday purchase into a small travel memory. Imagine a Cologne Cathedral motif: something a visitor can enjoy, photograph and remember, without buying a separate souvenir.

Landmark motifs are a creative concept, not an existing capability or customer installation. Verify decoration method, service times, permissions and actual site demand.

07 / WORKPLACES

Make room for better breaks.

Coffee is not always a product to sell. It can be part of what an employer provides for its people.



The familiar



Something different



More possibilities

Concept drink visuals. Actual menu and nutritional information depend on recipes and configuration.

Beyond the office coffee machine

Ice-enabled configurations can introduce cold drinks to a shared workplace. Matcha, milk alternatives and other menu choices can offer variety for different preferences.

Free at the point of use

An employer can explore funding all drinks, subsidising them, offering an allowance or letting employees pay. The employer and the person enjoying the drink need not be the same payer.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE, NOT RETAIL ROI

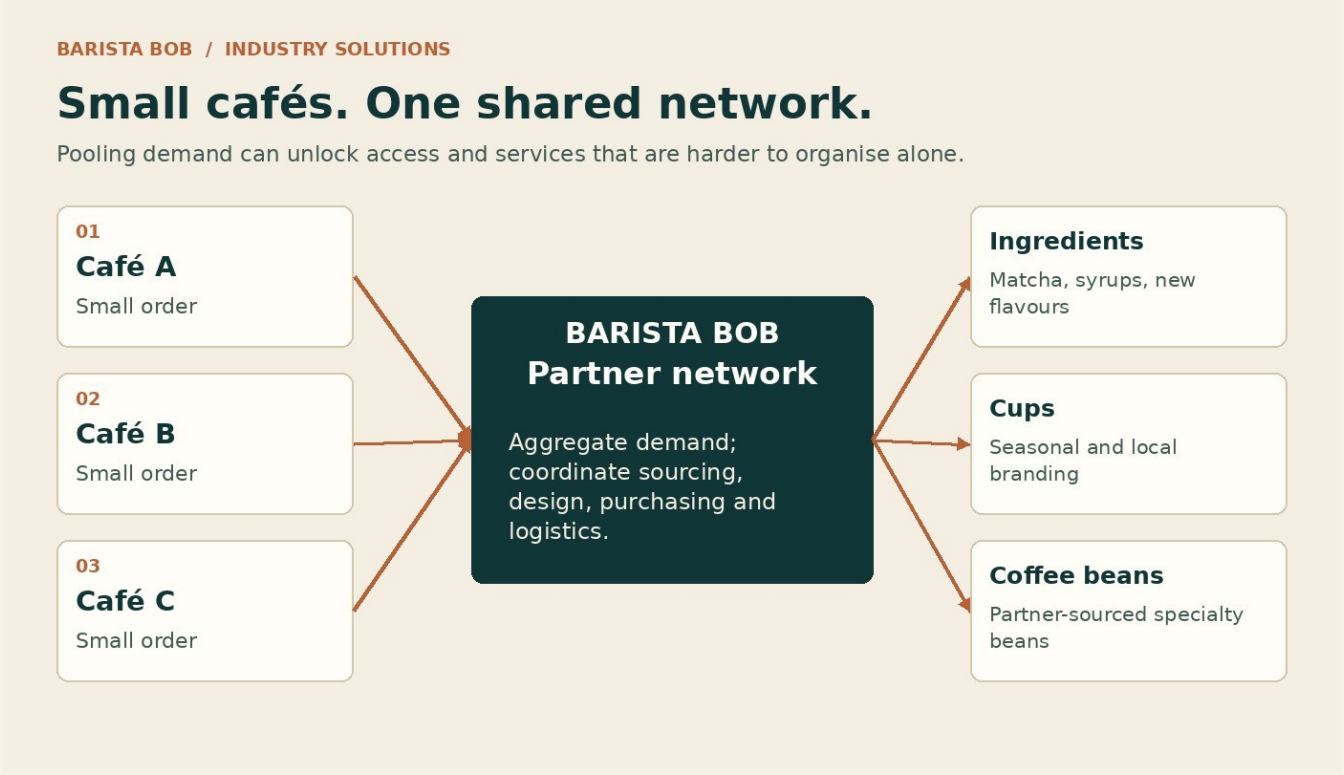
Evaluate cost per served cup, cost per eligible employee, actual utilisation, service reliability and employee feedback. The return need not be a profit on coffee.

For People & Culture, Employee Experience and Facilities teams: start with your welfare budget, drink preferences, access rules and shared spaces. Explore a service arrangement that fits those needs.

08 / SHARED CAPABILITIES

Stay local. Think together.

The scale of a network. The character of a local café.



Conceptual partner network: pooled needs and coordinated services, not a guarantee of prices or availability.

Discover new ingredients

A shared network can explore sourcing distinctive syrups, matcha from Guizhou and ingredients such as tagatose. Specialty bean purchasing through partners can open further options for independent venues.

A cup that feels like yours

Aggregate small custom-cup orders, support seasonal artwork, and explore compliant production in China and consolidated freight to Europe when practical. Each café retains its own identity.

Shared procurement, menu development, packaging, brand design, logistics and technical service can make resources more accessible without requiring every venue to become a chain.

09 / ECONOMIC MODELS

What makes a good coffee business?

The answer changes depending on what the venue wants from the service.

01 Revenue model

RETAIL / CAFÉS / TRANSIT

Evaluate paid drink sales and contribution after direct ingredient, packaging, labour, site and agreed service costs. Include linked food sales only when measured.

Paid cups × realised selling price − relevant operating costs

02 Service-cost model

WORKPLACES / EDUCATION / AMENITIES

Assess the cost of making drinks available to a defined community. The main objective may be accessibility, employee experience or guest service rather than drink profit.

Total relevant service cost ÷ cups served

03 Hybrid model

HOSPITALITY / EDUCATION / MIXED SPACES

Combine paid drinks with complimentary entitlements, sponsor funding or institutional subsidy. Separate actual revenue and cost from qualitative experience outcomes.

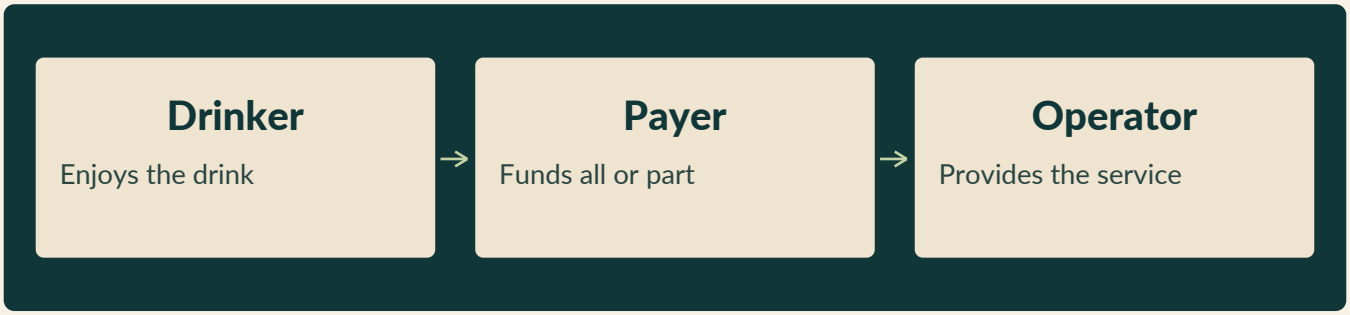
Paid drink revenue + agreed funding − relevant costs

Simplified evaluation formulas, not accounting definitions or guaranteed financial performance. Model financing, taxes and contractual terms separately as applicable.

10 / COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The drinker doesn't have to be the payer.

Pay per Cup can describe a commercial settlement based on actual drink service, not just a customer buying a coffee.



POSSIBLE PAYMENT DESIGNS

Environment	Potential payer	Example arrangement
Retail & cafés	Customer	Direct payment; agreed revenue share may apply.
Hotels	Guest or hotel	Paid cups, welcome vouchers, breakfast or lounge entitlement.
Education	Student or institution	Direct purchase, subsidy or campus-funded offer.
Workplaces	Employee or employer	Free drinks, subsidy, allowance or direct purchase.
Travel & Transit	Passenger or host	Paid drinks, lounge-funded or included service.

An entitlement is not the same as an integrated payment feature. Agree redemption, reconciliation, pricing, service responsibilities and payment or billing mechanisms before launch. The commercial agreement defines who carries each cost and receives each share.

11 / EVERYDAY OPERATIONS

Designed around the way you work.

Automation can take care of repeated drink preparation while people look after people and the space.

Customers

Select, order and collect configured drinks. They can optionally personalise finishing touches and stay or leave.

Bob

Executes the supported preparation sequence and recipes, within the validated configuration.

Venue team

Provides agreed daily care: restocking, cleaning, monitoring, quality checks and human hospitality.

Service partners

Support agreed installation, training, maintenance and escalation. Scope depends on the service arrangement.

SITE PLANNING / FOUR QUESTIONS

Your space	Access, utilities, circulation, ordering and collection.
Your people	Traffic, dwell time, demand peaks and supervision.
Your menu	Recipes, ingredients, storage, allergens and availability.
Your operations	Cleaning, supplies, staffing and technical response.

Semi-supervised self-service does not mean unattended or maintenance-free operation. Verify venue and configuration requirements.

12 / FROM CONCEPT TO PRACTICE

One location is a good place to start.

Start with a defined use case. Learn what works. Expand only when the evidence supports it.

01
Start
Agree purpose, placement, offer, roles and baseline.

02
Learn
Observe the actual demand, quality, costs and operations.

03
Expand
Refine the model and consider other locations.

A DIFFERENT SCORECARD FOR EACH SECTOR

Sector	What to measure
Retail	Store contribution, drink mix, attachment to food, conversion.
Cafés & Bakeries	Drink quality, staff time, customer creativity, menu contribution.
Hospitality	Voucher use, repeat cups, guest feedback, service costs.
Education	Accessible price, repeat use, peaks and academic seasonality.
Travel & Transit	Order-to-pickup time, peak throughput, abandonment and uptime.
Workplaces	Utilisation, cost per cup, cost per employee and feedback.

At every site, record the actual configuration, operating hours, downtime, replenishment and service costs. Compare with the relevant alternative. Avoid treating a single location as proof that the same result will be achieved across a network.

Scale the model, not just the equipment.

THE PERSONALITY OF BOB

Technology with a little warmth.

Bob doesn’t pretend to be human. He simply wants to make being human a little nicer.

The most useful question is not whether a robot can make coffee. It is whether a coffee-making system can help a place become a little more useful, welcoming or memorable, without taking away what makes the place its own.

A LITTLE NOTE FROM BOB

**I’ll take care of the coffee.
You take care of each other.**

— Bob

ABOUT THIS WHITE PAPER

Prepared from Barista Bob’s *Industry Solutions — Strategy*, *Website Copy & Development Brief*, version 2 (25 November 2026), and the founding team’s supplied operating observations and visual references. It presents a practical framework, not an independent market survey. The Yangzhou resort account is founder-reported; the Beijing conference, campus, transit and workplace examples are proposed or illustrative scenarios. No market-size, comparative speed, cost-saving or profitability studies are claimed.

Concept illustrations are labelled; actual drink references are identified where used. Features, recipes, supplier terms, branded drink techniques, supervision requirements and payment options depend on confirmed configuration and agreements. Assess real conditions before commercial rollout.

LET’S TALK ABOUT YOUR SPACE

Barista Bob / 2026